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RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 2413
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 KATHMANDU 000340

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TAGS: PREL PGOV PTER UN NP

SUBJECT: UN WILL REPORT MAOIST WEAPON DISCREPANcies AFTER ARMS REGISTRATION

REF: KATHMANDU 165

Classified By: Ambassador James F. Moriarty. Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

Summary

¶1. (C) Newly-designated Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) to Nepal Ian Martin told the

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Ambassador February 8 that once the UN arms registration process was complete, the UN would report the total number and type of weapons the Maoists had turned in to the Government of Nepal (GON), the UN-GON-Maoist Joint Monitoring Coordinating Committee (JMCC), and the Maoist leadership. The UN would also note discrepancies between arms collected and the GON list of Maoist-captured weapons. This was a departure from Martin's January 22 statement to the Ambassador that it would be up to the GON to determine when arms management was complete (reftel). Martin and the Ambassador shared concern about the dire situation in the People's Liberation Army (PLA) camps. They welcomed the idea of a GON-convened roundtable that might help prevent the Madhesi issue from sparking a broader outpouring of minority grievances that could otherwise paralyze election plans and upset Nepal's peace process.

UNMIN will Compare Weapons Collected to Weapons Captured

¶2. (C) Newly designated Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) for Nepal Ian Martin told the

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Ambassador February 8 that once the UN finished registration and containerization of arms, UN arms monitors would compare numbers and types of weapons to the GON-generated list of Maoist captured weapons. This information would be submitted by the UN to the JMCC, the GON, and the Maoists. Martin said the UN would also issue a report describing what they had expected in terms of numbers and types based on the GON list and the actual number received through the registration process. Martin's statements stood in welcome contrast to a January 22 discussion with the Ambassador in which Martin had seemed unwilling to acknowledge any discrepancies that might

occur and had merely said it would be up to the GON to determine whether arms management was complete (reftel).

Toward a Grand Total of Weapons

¶3. (C) Martin noted that two main tasks remained before the UN could calculate the final total of Maoist weapons and combatants. First, arms monitors had to complete registration in the western and eastern cantonment sites; second, the Seven-Party Alliance and the Maoist leadership had to address the arms used to provide personal security for Maoist political leaders. On the first task, Martin said the western districts were almost done, and the eastern sites, depending on unrest in the Terai, could be completed by mid-to late-February. On the second task, Martin said he was still pushing the GON and Maoists to resolve the issue. One option was for Maoist VIP security details to go on the government payroll and receive government-issued weapons. The Ambassador raised reports that Maoist cadre in Nepal's countryside were often armed, enabling them to threaten unarmed and vulnerable cadre from the other political parties.

Martin, Ambassador Agree on Dire State of Camps

¶4. (C) Martin stressed that, while the UN Mission in Nepal (UNMIN) mandate did not cover camp management, he was concerned that poor conditions in the camps could harm the registration and arms monitoring process. Martin pointed to the lack of coordination between the GON and Maoists on camp management. He said he had taken Matthew Kahane, head of the UN Development Program (UNDP), and Richard Ragan, head of the UN World Food Program, out to dinner with Maoist Supremo Prachanda and Maoist second-in-command Bataram Bhattarai to make it clear that the UN was willing to assist in providing

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food aid and services to improve camp conditions. The Maoists, however, preferred cash contributions. Martin worried that although it was outside their mandate, the UN would be blamed if camp conditions continued to deteriorate. He added that Sushil Rana, the GON Home Ministry head for camp management, had rejected Martin's offer to join Martin on visits to the camps.

"Roundtable" to Address Minority Grievances

¶5. (C) The Ambassador and Martin discussed the recent events in the Terai and the potential impact on the planned Constituent Assembly election in June. They noted that the problem was not simply a Madhesi one, but rather reflected a broader lack of inclusiveness in Nepal's political structure and peace process. Martin said that the positive side of the Madhesi crisis was that it had raised the public's political consciousness. The Ambassador agreed, adding that Nepal's under-represented communities had been shut out as Prime Minister Koirala and Maoist Supremo Prachanda negotiated their own way forward. Despite the legitimate grievances of the Madhesis, the Ambassador and Martin agreed that the Madhesi issue might mark the start of a series of pushes by groups with grievances, with the potential to paralyze the electoral process and stop the peace process in its tracks. They raised the idea of a GON-convened roundtable, which would include representatives from disadvantaged groups such as the Madhesis, the Janajati, Dalits, and women, to allow them to air their concerns and navigate a way forward for the elections and the Constitution. The Ambassador and Martin agreed on the importance of avoiding a group-by-group "cherry-picking" exercise that would have dire consequences for Nepal's future.

Martin Describes UN Coordination, Budget

¶ 6. (C) When asked by the Ambassador how UN coordination in Nepal would work under the UNMIN mandate, Martin said that, as Special Representative for the Secretary General (SRSG), he would be vested with UN Chief of Mission authority. In typical settings, the Resident Representative would become his Deputy. However, because of UNMIN's narrow and limited one-year mandate, Martin said he would instead have a "senior management group" that included Matthew Kahane, current UN Resident Representative, and Lena Sundh, Head of the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, rather than restructuring the entire UN country team. Martin said he would also have two international staff responsible for ensuring coordination between UNMIN activities and the work of other UN offices and agencies active in Nepal. Martin mentioned the push in New York toward integrated missions. He said that the UNMIN budget would be presented February 26 in New York for review, and that funds would likely be released in early March. Martin said he could, however, incur expenses against anticipated funds. He described the larger logistic challenge the UN faced -- getting needed transport equipment, such as 50 vehicles stuck in India because of the Terai unrest.

Comment

¶ 7. (C) We are delighted to hear that UNMIN will speak authoritatively to the JMCC, GON, and Maoists if there are discrepancies between the GON-generated list of weapons Maoists captured and the weapons the Maoists hand in. This information will be vital to ensure that the People's Liberation Army is separated from its weapons when the Maoists join an Interim Government. The poor state of the Maoist cantonments, particularly if elections are delayed and combatants remain cantoned for many months (as appears increasingly likely) is grounds for concern. While UNMIN's narrow arms monitoring mandate is clear, the UN must use its moral authority to push the GON and Maoists to cooperate in improving conditions in the camps. We will continue to explore options for promoting a roundtable to provide an efficient mechanism for Madhesia and Nepal's other

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disadvantaged to air legitimate grievances and have a say in Nepal's way forward.

MORIARTY